

Scotland Lady Milne 2015 biographies

Helen Kane

"I started playing bridge in my early 20's when I met my future husband to be, Danny , who was already a keen bridge player. A number of years later, I made 5 Lady Milne appearances, partnering the late Eileen Caldwell and then Liz McGowan. Due to increasing work commitments, I then gave up bridge for a considerable period of time. However, 3 years ago, I took early retirement from my work as a cytopathologist and renewed my interest in bridge. I formed a partnership with Anne Symons in late 2014 and am delighted to be back as part of this year's Lady Milne Team. Aside from bridge, my interests are classical music, playing the piano, and walking, especially in the Scottish countryside and in the Lake District."

Michele Gladstone

I took up bridge when my husband went back to studying and I needed some form of escape from 2 young children. I constantly nagged my bridge playing friends to partner me as I was pretty rubbish but was fortunate to play with and against the bridge greats of that time Victor Goldberg, Sam Leckie & Albert Benjamin. You learn pretty quickly!

My long term partner Ian Howie patiently taught me the finer points of the game and helped me become the player I am today.

2 years ago I played for the SBU team when the Lady Milne was hosted in Scotland. This year, with my new partner Liz McGowan, I am excited to be representing Scotland again.

Paula Leslie

"I started playing bridge at school in Dundee together with Suzanne Cohen (now Sheasby) with whom I have won a number of events over the years. I also have five bronze medals from various European events and my ambition is to one day to win a gold or silver medal. I have played in the Lady Milne twice before with Suzanne with a 50% success rate but this will be my first time playing with Sam Punch.

I moved to London after university, qualified as a chartered accountant and now work as a tax adviser for a commercial property group. Outside of bridge I enjoy pub quizzes, cinema, theatre and travel".

Liz McGowan

I played my first Lady Milne in 1977, and this will be my 31st appearance, with my 9th partner. I have won 8 times, and would like to reach double figures, but I'm running out of time.....

Prior to 2000 Liz, I was a member of the British Women's team, picked up silver medals at the 1988 and '92 Olympiads and gold at the Europeans in '97 and '99. I also won the 1996 World Mixed Teams with Heather Dhondy when the two were eliminated from the Venice Cup and, while drowning their sorrows in the bar, "chatted up" the Icelandic men who had suffered the same fate in the Bermuda Bowl.

My daily column in 'The Scotsman' has recently been axed, so I'm looking for something else to do. I live in Edinburgh with husband Ian, and two daughters, and much loved grand-daughter.

Sam Punch

I have played in the Scottish women's team since 2008, winning the Lady Milne four times in the last seven years. Playing with Liz we were recently on the winning team for the Commonwealth's transnational teams in Glasgow. Paula and I are a new partnership so this is our first Lady Milne together. Professor of sociology at Stirling University, where I'm currently supervising a Masters thesis titled: 'Why are men more successful at bridge than women?' If you have any relevant material, I would love to hear from you at s.v.punch@stir.ac.uk

Anne Symons

I have been a regular member of the team for the past 10 years, playing in Europeans, Olympiads and Lady Milnes. Still working full-time as a Pharmacist, I am hoping to cut back next year and spend more time on bridge. Recently, I have been involved with Junior training and have been NPC for the Peggy Bayer and Junior Camrose teams, and also at the other end of the age spectrum, for the Seniors. In some respects, it's hard to tell the difference! My partnership with Helen has just begun, and this is our first LM together.

Alan Goodman (NPC)

Have played European and Olympiad for Scotland's Open and senior teams and captained a number of different Scottish teams over the last 7 years in Europeans, Olympiads and Camrose. I really enjoyed captaining the SBU Lady Milne team in 2013 so very much look forward to captaining the Scotland team this year. Having retired, I'm now busier than ever as chairman of two Scottish charities and vice captain of the golf club. Married with three grown up girls and one 3 year old grandson. At last somebody who likes to play football with me!